

Your Name *

Mary Harrison

School or Organization *

Wichita State University

Position/Grade Level/Subject Area *

Secondary English-Language Arts

Presentation Title *

Sympathy for the Devil: How an Author Inspires Empathy

Presentation's intended audience *

Please check all that might apply

- Elementary (K-5)
- Middle (6-8)
- **High (9-12) ***
- Post-Secondary
- Administration
- Other:

Presentation's Area of Focus or Specialty *

Please check all that might apply

- Writing skills
- **Reading skills ***
- **Literary interpretation/analysis ***
- Research/Inquiry
- **Speaking/Listening ***
- New teachers
- **Multicultural literature/experience ***
- LGBTQ
- **Interdisciplinary ***
- **Technology ***
- Other:

Full Description/Explanation of Expected Presentation Content *

Share stories. Shape change. This year's theme succinctly articulates the reason that I love teaching literature. Literature provides a valuable venue within which students can cultivate empathy by embedding themselves in unfamiliar experiences. This newfound empathy has the power to inspire up-and-coming generations to look upon others with compassion and to become agents for the changes that they want to see. This presentation seeks to tie the conference theme to the concept of literary analysis through exploration of an author's choices. The pertinence of this type of literary analysis stems from the following Common Core standard for eleventh and twelfth grade English/Language Arts:

RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Kansas Association of Teachers of English (KATE)

In order to tether the conference theme to this standard, I will engage session participants in learning activities that introduce a unit on Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*. We will analyze and evaluate Zusak's decision to use Death as his narrator, and his decision to feature a non-Jewish German protagonist, given the World War II setting. Participants will also view clips from a documentary about modern day North Korea's totalitarian regime and its effect on the citizens. After the screening, we will reflect on whether these citizens can be viewed as villains or victims, comparing and contrasting modern-day North Koreans and the German citizens during World War II.

During my presentation, participants will view an interactive PowerPoint that I designed to accompany this lesson. As we engage in each learning activity, I will describe the reasoning behind each transition within the lesson as it pertains to the concrete learning objectives, to the cultivation of empathy, to the inclusion of multiple learning modalities, and to classroom management.

Participants will engage in hands-on activities, receive handouts of learning activities, and a list of resources for further reading.

Presentation Description for the Conference Program *

This session describes the importance of exploring literary analysis with students via discussions concerning authors' choices and features learning activities designed to introduce Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*. Participants will explore how to initiate student-led discussions regarding Zusak's non-conventional choices of narrator and protagonist and discuss how literature can inspire empathy and broader perspectives within the reader.

What day(s) are you available to present? * (Oct. 22 and/or Oct. 23)

Oct. 22

If you anticipate any technology needs for your presentation, please describe those below.

I will need a projector with connections for a lap top, speakers, and a projection screen. I will use my own laptop.

If you would be interested in facilitating a workshop, discussion or roundtable, briefly describe the topic you'd like to facilitate.

n/a